United Nations S/PV.3673

# Security Council

Fifty-first Year

*Provisional*

**3673**rd Meeting
Friday, 14 June 1996, 10 a.m.
New York

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President*: | Mr. Elaraby | (Egypt) |
| *Members*: | Botswana | Mr. Nkgowe |
| | Chile | Mr. Larraín |
| | China | Mr. Wang Xuexian |
| | France | Mr. Dejammet |
| | Germany | Mr. Kaul |
| | Guinea-Bissau | Mr. Queta |
| | Honduras | Mr. Martínez Blanco |
| | Indonesia | Mr. Wisnumurti |
| | Italy | Mr. Fulci |
| | Poland | Mr. Matuszewski |
| | Republic of Korea | Mr. Park |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Lavrov |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sir John Weston |
| | United States of America | Mrs. Albright |

## Agenda

The situation in Tajikistan and along the Tajik-Afghan border

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan (S/1996/412)

96-85793 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

*The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The situation in Tajikistan and along the Tajik-Afghan border**

**Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan (S/1996/412)**

**The President** (*interpretation from Arabic*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Tajikistan in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) took a seat at the Council table.*

**The President** (*interpretation from Arabic*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan, document S/1996/412.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1996/430, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

The first speaker is the representative of Tajikistan, on whom I now call.

**Mr. Alimov** (Tajikistan) (*interpretation from Russian*): Allow me sincerely to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the post of President of the Security Council this month, and to wish you success in your multifaceted activity aimed at ensuring effective work by the Council. Allow me also to express our gratitude to the Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China, Ambassador Qin Huasun, President of the Security Council for the month of May, for the significant and positive work he did as President.

The Government of Tajikistan highly appreciates the assistance of the international community in resolving the inter-Tajik conflict. I have been entrusted, on behalf of the President of Tajikistan, Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, with conveying his words of genuine gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the enormous attention and efforts directed to the achievement of peace and accord in Tajikistan.

My Government notes with great satisfaction that the Security Council pays constant attention to the question of an inter-Tajik settlement and is taking concrete steps aimed at the rapid achievement of national reconciliation in Tajikistan.

We highly appreciate the efforts of the former Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Ramiro Píriz-Ballón, who made a significant contribution to a settlement of the inter-Tajik conflict, and we express the hope that the recently appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Gerd Merrem, will successfully continue these efforts.

An important and invaluable contribution to ensuring a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Tajikistan is being made by States and regional international organizations, acting as observers at the inter-Tajik talks.

We note with satisfaction the existence of close and useful ties between the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and the collective peacekeeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), as well as with the border forces in Tajikistan, which clearly is an important factor in stabilizing the situation.

The unresolved conflict and its socio-economic consequences are a heavy burden on the shoulders of the long-suffering people of Tajikistan. In this connection, I consider it extremely important to reaffirm that my Government is fully committed to a solely peaceful political solution to existing problems, and firmly favours the continuation of the inter-Tajik talks under the aegis of the United Nations, despite their relatively meagre results so far, for which the government delegation is not to blame.

In striving for an early resumption of the activities of the Joint Commission on the implementation of the Agreement on a Temporary Cease-fire and the Cessation of Other Hostile Acts on the Tajik-Afghan Border and within the Country, my Government in a note verbale dated 8 June 1996 to UNMOT once again reaffirmed its readiness to provide protection for the representatives of the opposition who are members of that Commission. We are counting on this step by the Government removing the existing obstacles and speeding up a resumption of the activities of the Joint Commission.

Attaching the greatest importance to a negotiated settlement, my Government is closely cooperating with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and with UNMOT, and is also taking additional steps to establish civil peace and accord in the country.

The initiative of the President, His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, led to the signing on 9 March 1996 in Dushanbe of an agreement on social accord in Tajikistan, to which, along with the leaders of the country, the leaders of nearly 40 political parties, social movements, national associations and religious communities put their signatures. The agreement represents a model for national reconciliation; it offers the prospect of building a pluralistic democratic society with high standards in the sphere of the human rights and equal participation of all political and regional forces in the public life of the country.

That same objective was pursued by my Government when, at the inter-Tajik talks, it proposed the initiative of holding a special session of the Parliament with the participation of the leaders of the Islamic Revival Movement of Tajikistan and other representatives of the United Tajik Opposition. We are firmly convinced that this session could have become a turning-point in the process of national reconciliation. One can only regret the fact that, despite the appeal of the Secretary-General, conveyed to the leaders of the opposition through his former Special Envoy, Mr. Ismat Kittani, the leaders of the Opposition refused to take part in the work of the special session, thereby violating the sole agreement set down in the Ashgabat declaration.

To achieve its objectives, the irreconcilable armed wing of the opposition — apparently not without the consent of the leaders of the United Tajik Opposition — is inclined to pursue its policy of exerting continuous armed pressure on the Government. These forces continue to make wide use of the tactics of terrorism and intimidation and systematically and flagrantly violate the Agreement on a Temporary Cease-fire and the Cessation of Other Hostile Acts on the Tajik-Afghan Border and within the Country. On 21 May this year, the Security Council rightly condemned the planned and organized offensive acts of the armed Tajik opposition, which have caused many casualties among the civilian population.

We are grateful to donor countries, the United Nations specialized agencies and international organizations for their efforts to provide disinterested assistance to our country. However, despite the intensive humanitarian support of the international community, the situation remains critical. Moreover, heavy rains, spring floods and mud slides have caused appreciable losses to the national economy, the agricultural sector in particular. There have been human casualties and significant damage in the social sphere. As a result, the humanitarian situation has deteriorated still further. The population of Tajikistan continues to experience acute shortages of food and medicine. Despite my Government's strenuous efforts to mitigate the consequences of the natural disasters, all this undeniably has a negative effect on the country's economy, which has already been disrupted by civil war, and on the social welfare of the people.

We express the hope that the Security Council's appeal of 21 May 1996

> "to respond promptly in support of the humanitarian relief efforts of the United Nations and other international organizations" (*S/PV.3665, p. 3*)

for Tajikistan will be heard and that support for the people of my country in these difficult times will be forthcoming.

I consider it necessary to stress once again that the Government of Tajikistan believes that the road to peace in the country passes through the continuation of inter-Tajik dialogue and the resolution of existing differences on the basis of constitutional legality and solely through political means. We are convinced that it is precisely in this way that stability can be restored in the country and that our people will have the opportunity to advance further on the path of national accord, the development of democratic social institutions and the implementation of economic reforms.

On this basis, the Government of Tajikistan would welcome a decision by the Security Council to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in

Tajikistan, because the personnel of UNMOT, representing the United Nations presence in the region, to a great extent promotes stability and the continuation of the peace process as a whole.

**The President** (*interpretation from Arabic*): I thank the representative of Tajikistan for his kind words addressed to me.

**Mr. Fulci** (Italy): First of all, allow me to express to you, Sir, my warmest personal congratulations on your assumption of the duties of the President of the Security Council for the month of June. Having known you since the first day I came here, I have not the slightest doubt that your performance will be remembered.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express heartfelt thanks to the Permanent Representative of China, Ambassador Qin Huasun, for the way in which he exercised his duties most impartially during the month of May.

I have the honour to speak in my capacity as Presidency of the European Union.

The Security Council has closely monitored the situation in Tajikistan over the past few months and expressed its great concern at the worsening of conditions on the ground. Military activities by the opposition and, more recently, by the Government have shown that the cease-fire is at best frail and subject to large-scale violations.

In our opinion, the presidential statement of 21 May sent a clear message to the parties after the premeditated offensive by the armed Tajik opposition in the Tavildara region. The Council noted with concern that the spiral of violence had taken the lives of civilians and of members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Collective Peace-keeping Forces.

At the same time, the political stalemate in the inter-Tajik dialogue following the Ashgabat talks was blamed on the loss of trust between the parties. Some of the elements in this troublesome picture were the opposition's attitude in the negotiations and in the field; the lack of adequate written safety guarantees given by the Government to opposition members on the Joint Commission; and the delay in investigating the fate of Mr. Zafar Rakhmonov, abducted last February.

We share the assessment of the Secretary-General in his report (S/1996/412) of 7 June and endorse his proposals. We would like to focus on the following three aspects.

A solution to this conflict can be achieved only through the inter-Tajik dialogue. But the necessary political solution remains elusive. Therefore, the inter-Tajik talks should be resumed without delay. Unfortunately, opposition members chose not to participate in the special session of the Parliament, organized on the initiative of President Rakhmonov as a first step towards the participation of all political forces in Tajikistan in the reconciliation process. As the Secretary-General's report indicates, the opposition leaders have reiterated their ideas on the establishment of a Council of National Reconciliation. Whatever formula is ultimately pursued, national reconciliation must clearly be a central element of the inter-Tajik dialogue.

We welcome the appointment of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Tajikistan, Mr. Gerd Merrem, who has initiated contacts with the parties and the leaders of the region. A first result has been obtained: the Government and the opposition have agreed to extend for another three months, until 26 August 1996, the validity of the Tehran Agreement on a Temporary Cease-fire and the Cessation of Other Hostile Acts on the Tajik-Afghan Border and within the Country. However, the cease-fire has been seriously violated and, according to the latest reports, fighting continues.

The parties must respect obligations they have undertaken. The international community cannot continue to provide support and commitment without a much greater level of cooperation from the parties themselves. They must build upon the initially positive signals given in May when they decided to extend the cease-fire. We rely upon the mediating efforts of the Special Representative. Concrete confidence-building measures, such as the unconditional release of the prisoners captured by the opposition in the Tavildara area, should be implemented.

In this framework, we support the Secretary-General's recommendation to extend the UNMOT mandate for another six months. However, we remain concerned that delays in implementing an effective cease-fire may create a situation in which direct United Nations involvement after this six-month period will not be advisable. We cannot tolerate threats to the security of UNMOT personnel, nor can we allow restrictions to be

placed on the freedom of movement of the military observers for reasons unrelated to their security. Now, more than ever, a clear message must be sent to the parties that the United Nations considerable efforts, in terms of both financial and human resources, as well as participation in the negotiations, cannot be taken for granted.

Further delays in reaching a significant outcome in the inter-Tajik dialogue may prejudice not only the momentum in the negotiations that the United Nations is trying to maintain, but also the financial support badly needed by a population and a country so much afflicted by this crisis.

The following countries associated with the European Union align themselves with this statement: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Iceland and Norway also align themselves with this statement.

**The President** (*interpretation from Arabic*): I thank the representative of Italy for the kind words he addressed to me.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

**Mr. Kaul** (Germany): Let me begin by saying that Germany fully supports the statement made by the representative of Italy on behalf of the European Union and the States that have again associated themselves with another important statement of the European Union.

Today's meeting of the Security Council provides an important opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved by the efforts of the parties to the conflict, and those of this Council, the Secretary-General and his Special Representatives, and other States and entities involved. The result is that there is still intensive fighting in the Tavildara area, the humanitarian situation is very serious, and the prospects for progress in the inter-Tajik talks are bleak. The Tehran Agreement of 17 September 1994, which constitutes the basis for a negotiated political settlement, has at best been partially implemented.

The armed Islamist opposition seems to be about to take control of a large and strategically important part of Tajikistan. The region of Leninabad and other areas are gradually slipping from Government control. There are even some signs of disunity within the Kulyabi-dominated Government. We therefore see a concrete danger of an "Afghanization" of the conflict, with serious consequences for regional stability.

Both parties bear a heavy load of responsibility for this development. We see, however, a major obstacle to a settlement in the Government's failure to open itself up to the participation of other regional and political groups in Tajikistan. A viable political compromise cannot consist only in power-sharing between the parties to the conflict, but must aim at establishing genuine democratic decision-making processes. Without a readiness by the Government to genuinely share power, however, a compromise cannot be reached.

Germany supports the draft resolution, which provides for an extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) for another six months. We attribute, however, great importance to the intention expressed in both the Secretary-General's report and the draft resolution to seriously review the future of the United Nations commitment in Tajikistan after these six months, if there is no meaningful progress in the peace process.

In this context, what is needed first and foremost is an immediate cessation of hostilities by both sides. If both parties continue to play the military card and drag their feet on a continuation of the inter-Tajik talks, the result will be only pain and more misery for the people of Tajikistan. We call upon the parties to seek a peaceful, negotiated settlement; if this call is not heard and if the obligations undertaken by the parties are not respected, the Council will eventually be forced to draw its conclusions.

If UNMOT is to effectively fulfil its mandate, all restrictions on its freedom of movement must be lifted, especially by the Government of Tajikistan. Verbal assurances that this will happen are not sufficient. Furthermore, it is imperative that the Joint Commission established to monitor cease-fire violations resume its work, after the walkout by the opposition, which was prompted by the kidnapping of the opposition Co-Chairman of the Commission on 24 February 1996. It is regrettable that there has been no news from the Government of Tajikistan on the results of its

investigation of this incident. On the other hand, we have noted that the Government has obviously now given the written security guarantees asked for by the opposition, and we encourage the opposition to accept them in good faith.

The parties to the conflict, both the Government of Tajikistan and the opposition, should now understand the stern warning message given to them in today's draft resolution. The Council is giving the parties another, and probably a last, six-month chance, to actually demonstrate their commitment to an effective cease-fire and to national reconciliation, to be achieved with the assistance of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNMOT and the Commonwealth of Independent States peace-keepers.

Germany is pleased that it was able to make a voluntary contribution of DM 1 million to UNMOT in order to provide it with an air transport capacity.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to, and thank, the members of UNMOT for carrying out their mission under what are now very difficult circumstances.

**The President**: I call on the representative of the United Kingdom on a point of order.

**Sir John Weston** (United Kingdom): I am sorry to interrupt the normal proceedings, but I have to comment on something the representative of Germany has just said. In referring to Ambassador Fulci's statement, he said that he was speaking on behalf of the European Union. I have the statement of Ambassador Fulci in front of me, and he nowhere claims in his statement to be speaking on behalf of the European Union. He was careful to say that he was speaking in his capacity as Presidency of the European Union. That is because my own instructions did not permit me to agree to his speaking on behalf of the European Union, for reasons with which the German delegation is familiar and which have nothing to do with the subject on our agenda today.

**Mr. Lavrov** (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Russian Federation is extremely concerned by the lack of progress towards a political settlement of the conflict in Tajikistan and, in particular, by the wide-scale hostilities in the Tavildara region. The Tajik parties must indeed reaffirm their declared dedication solely to a peaceful political settlement of the conflict on the basis of mutual concessions and compromises. We welcome the statement just made by the representative of Tajikistan containing such assurances. We are firmly convinced that only full and unswerving implementation by the parties of all the commitments they have undertaken and of Security Council resolutions can create the requisite conditions for successful progress in the negotiating process. We firmly condemn the terrorist acts against the civilian population and the Peace-keeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Terrorism must come to an end.

Russia is in favour of making the inter-Tajik dialogue truly continuous and dynamic. We welcome the agreement on the resumption of the Ashgabat round of inter-Tajik talks. We call upon the parties to take a responsible attitude towards their participation and to demonstrate the political will to achieve compromise solutions to key problems in the settlement.

We wish all success to the Secretary-General's Special Representative in his noble efforts. As an observer State at the inter-Tajik talks, Russia will render him all possible support.

The Russian delegation attaches great importance to the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan, whose activities are an important factor for restraint and stabilization and provide indispensable support for constructive political dialogue. The Collective Peace-keeping Forces of the CIS and the Russian border forces will continue to support the Mission's efforts in implementing its mandate. The Tajik parties must immediately eliminate all obstacles and create the requisite conditions for the Mission to function effectively and for the speedy resumption of the Joint Commission's activities in monitoring the implementation of the cease-fire agreement. We note the reaffirmation by the Government of Tajikistan of its dedication to the principle of freedom of movement of the United Nations observers and of the provision of security guarantees for opposition members of the Joint Commission.

The Russian delegation expresses its gratitude to all members of the Council for their support of the fundamental provisions of the draft resolution we have introduced and for their important proposals and additions, which have substantially enhanced its political weight.

We trust that the Tajik parties will show full responsibility and will note and heed the unanimous position of the Security Council.

**Mr. Nkgowe** (Botswana): The delegation of Botswana is deeply troubled by the large-scale fighting in Tajikistan. The parties are clearly unwilling to meet the conditions set out in the resolutions of the Security Council. It is regrettable that the situation in Tajikistan remains what it was six months ago, when the Council last reviewed the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT). In other words, there has been no meaningful progress in the inter-Tajik peace talks, despite the stated intentions of the parties to resolve their differences through political dialogue. It is disturbing indeed that the hostilities are reported to have reached new levels of intensity since the civil war ended in 1992.

My delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us. UNMOT is doing a good job under very trying conditions, but we do not believe that now is the time to withdraw the Mission, as this would be likely to aggravate the situation in Tajikistan and adversely affect the peace and stability of the whole region. The resolution, however, rightly puts the parties on notice, in very clear language, that the extension of UNMOT's mandate is contingent upon the respect by the parties for the Tehran Agreement, an effective cease-fire and progress in the peace talks. The parties must understand that UNMOT's mandate cannot be extended indefinitely. Its extension depends on the cooperation of the parties themselves and on their demonstrable commitment to work towards the political settlement of their differences.

It is our hope that the parties will take serious note of paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, which expresses the intention of the Council to review the future commitment of the United Nations in Tajikistan at the end of the next mandate period, should the prospects for a lasting peace not have improved. This is in line with the Secretary-General's statement, in paragraph 29 of his report, that if the prospects for a comprehensive peace settlement have not improved by the next review period, the Council will have to consider alternative options for the future of UNMOT, including the possibility of its withdrawal.

Finally, my delegation wishes to welcome the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Tajikistan, Mr. Merrem. We wish him every success in his new job.

**Mr. Park** (Republic of Korea): At the outset, my delegation wishes to extend its sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General for his detailed and objective report on the developments in Tajikistan, which also contains a timely recommendation for the Council's future course of action.

It is with great concern and dismay that my delegation has been following the deteriorating situation in Tajikistan, which, according to the Secretary-General's report, is at its worst and most volatile stage since the end of the civil war of 1992. In particular, the intensification of fighting around Tavildara since early May is a source of alarm. We are worried that the fall of Tavildara to the opposition on 12 May and the launching of a counter-offensive by Government forces on 2 June may be an ominous sign of the potential spread of violence plaguing the country.

As we are all aware, the military and the political dimensions of any conflict are closely intertwined. The situation in Tajikistan is no exception in this regard. In our view, the delay in the resumption of the inter-Tajik talks is just as disturbing as the situation on the ground. The very fact that the cease-fire has not been faithfully heeded by the Tajik parties confirms the vital importance of political will for the effective implementation of the commitment of a military nature.

In this vein, my delegation is encouraged to know that the Government of Tajikistan and the Tajik opposition both believe that the conflict in their country can be resolved only through political dialogue. We furthermore are relieved by the news that the two sides have finally agreed on the resumption of the inter-Tajik talks in early July.

We take this opportunity to express welcome and support to Mr. Gerd Merrem, the Secretary-General's new Special Representative for Tajikistan, as he vigorously works to bridge the gap between the views of the two parties and forge a genuine bond of national reconciliation. In addition to facilitating the agreement on the resumption of the inter-Tajik talks, he also played an instrumental role in securing the temporary but critical extension of the cease-fire agreement in May.

Although the Secretary-General requested that enough time be allowed to see the full outcome of the Special Representative's efforts, we are pleased that within a fairly short period of time, his mission has already had such positive results. Clearly, one of the major tasks of the Special Representative under the current circumstances is to help the Tajik parties take the necessary steps to translate their words into meaningful

action. We pledge him our full support as he takes on these critical challenges.

Keeping in mind that the proper functioning of institutional frameworks is also key for improving the situation in Tajikistan, I should like to make the following points. First and foremost, the safety and freedom of movement of the personnel of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) should be ensured. If the Tajik parties truly value the role played by UNMOT in stabilizing the situation in the country, this is the minimum that should be provided by the parties directly concerned.

Secondly, the activities of the Joint Commission, which has not been functioning for security reasons, should begin again without delay. As the Joint Commission is the only institutional framework created by the Tehran Agreement of 1994 and as it is composed of the parties directly concerned, we believe that the early resumption of its work is of great importance for the effective implementation of the cease-fire agreement.

Thirdly, UNMOT's regular contacts with the Russian border forces and the peace-keeping forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as the close cooperation between UNMOT and the Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which have to date been satisfactory, should continue to be further encouraged. Indeed, the liaison between UNMOT and regional arrangements serve as compelling evidence of the mutual benefit of such cooperation.

Lastly, the establishment of an additional liaison post at Taloqan should be expedited for the purpose of maintaining contact with the opposition leaders stationed there. In this regard, the speedy finalization of the necessary arrangements between the Afghan authorities and the United Tajik Opposition is required above all else.

Before concluding, I also wish to note the Secretary-General's recommendation that the Council review the United Nations commitment in the theatre of Tajikistan if the prospects for progress have not improved by the end of the next six months. My delegation truly hopes that this will serve as a strong message to the parties concerned that without the prompt restoration of an effective cease-fire, as well as due progress in political talks, the Council may have to respond accordingly.

As the document before us seems appropriately to reflect all the aforementioned points, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

**Mr. Martínez Blanco** (Honduras) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to express to you, Sir, our sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. Your outstanding skills and experience guarantee the success of our work. We offer our full cooperation to you and to the delegation of Egypt. We wish also to congratulate Ambassador Qin Huasun and the delegation of China on the excellent work accomplished this past May.

My delegation states its firm conviction that the solution to the current conflict in Tajikistan can be achieved only through peaceful means, through dialogue between the parties and on the basis of mutual commitments and concessions. Regrettably, because of the differences that still remain between the parties, the situation in Tajikistan has taken a clear turn for the worse, and no progress is being made in the negotiations towards a political settlement that would enable them to restore peace and national harmony.

The repeated statements by the Tajik parties to the effect that there should be no military solution to the conflict, that they are in favour of political dialogue and that they are prepared to resume negotiations seem contradictory in view of the resumption of hostilities in the country. Events such as those that took place in the Tavildara region, which resulted in the loss of human lives and aggravated the humanitarian situation, cast doubt on the parties' sincerity and their desire for peace.

My delegation believes that if the parties truly wish to continue with the negotiating process, they must first of all comply strictly with the provisions of the Tehran Agreement of 17 September 1994 on a cease-fire and the cessation of other hostile acts. As this is an essential prerequisite for the continuation of the talks, my delegation believes that the parties should not limit the extension of the cease-fire agreement to a short period of time, but rather extend it as long as may be necessary while negotiations between the parties are under way, as was proposed before by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General and accepted by the Government of Tajikistan only. My delegation, therefore, while urging the Tajik parties to respect effectively the obligations stemming from the Tehran Agreement and to cease hostilities immediately, wishes to appeal to them to

extend the cease-fire agreement for the entire duration of the talks.

As concerns the activities of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), my delegation regrets that military observers continue to be harassed, that the parties are limiting their freedom of movement and that, owing to a lack of security, the activities of the Joint Commission have been suspended. We hope that the Tajik opposition will accept the security guarantees offered by the Government of Tajikistan so that the work of the Joint Commission may resume soon.

My delegation believes that despite the obstacles that UNMOT has faced in carrying out its mission, its presence contributes to the stabilization of Tajikistan through its liaison activities with the Collective Peace-keeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Russian border forces and the Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and continues to facilitate humanitarian assistance. We shall therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Council, which extends UNMOT's mandate for six months.

Bearing in mind operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, we hope that the Tajik parties will effectively demonstrate a commitment to peace, democracy and national reconciliation and that they will soon be able to achieve an overall political settlement to the conflict.

**The President** (*interpretation from Arabic*): I thank the representative of Honduras for his kind words addressed to me.

**Mr. Queta** (Guinea-Bissau) (*interpretation from French*): As this is the first time that my delegation has spoken at a formal meeting under your presidency, Sir, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the leadership of the Security Council.

We are convinced that given your skills and experience, our work will be crowned with success. We also wish to pay tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Qin Huasun of China, and to his delegation, for his effective guidance of our work during the month of May.

The situation in Tajikistan remains tense because the parties to the conflict are not honouring the obligations to which they committed themselves under the Tehran cease-fire agreement. In our view, no effort can succeed without good faith on the part of the Tajik parties. Solving the problems of that country depends on the parties' determination to resolve their differences through a political dialogue on national reconciliation.

In that context, our delegation is encouraged to learn that the Tajik Government and the United Tajik Opposition have stated their conviction that the conflict in their country cannot be settled by military means. We take note also that the Tajik parties are prepared to resume talks and have accepted an unconditional three-month extension of the cease-fire agreement. We call upon the parties to maintain the cease-fire for the entire duration of the inter-Tajik talks, because we believe that this would be an important element in creating a favourable climate for the overall political dialogue towards national reconciliation and the promotion of democracy in that country.

My Government notes with deep concern the deterioration of the situation in Tajikistan, as recorded in the reports of the Secretary-General. My delegation considers that the Tajik parties themselves bear the primary responsibility for their differences. We call upon the parties to enable the Joint Commission to resume its activities without delay; in that connection, we encourage the Government of Tajikistan to provide the necessary security guarantees to the opposition members of the Joint Commission.

Guinea-Bissau attaches particular importance to the United Nations role in restoring peace to Tajikistan. We therefore regret the restrictions the Tajik parties have imposed on the movements of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT). It is our view that the parties' cooperation with UNMOT and with other international organizations operating in Tajikistan is a precondition for humanitarian activities there.

I wish in conclusion to express my delegation's satisfaction at the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General, the Commonwealth of Independent States and all others who are contributing to the quest for peace in Tajikistan. We welcome the appointment of Mr. Gerd Merrem as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Tajikistan, and we wish him every success in his difficult task.

Guinea-Bissau will vote in favour of the draft resolution before the Council in the hope that it will shed a glimmer of hope upon the impasse faced by the process of national reconciliation in Tajikistan.

**The President** (*interpretation from Arabic*): I thank the representative of Guinea-Bissau for the kind words he addressed to me.

**Mr. Wang Xuexian** (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes the representative of Tajikistan to the Security Council Chamber today. I listened to his statement attentively; it should be a positive element in the Council's deliberations on Tajikistan.

The Tajik parties recently agreed on a further three-month extension of the cease-fire agreement in order to create a climate conducive to the prompt resumption of political negotiations. We note that the two parties concerned are making preparations for the next round of political negotiations; the Chinese delegation welcomes this.

We reiterate that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Tajikistan should be respected. The basic approach to settling the question of Tajikistan is for the parties concerned to resolve their differences through peaceful negotiations and to achieve national reconciliation. As a neighbour of Tajikistan, we sincerely hope that Tajikistan will achieve peace, stability and the well-being of its people.

We support the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representatives to promote a comprehensive political settlement of the Tajik question. In carrying out its mission, the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) has played and will continue to play a positive role. We hope that the two parties concerned will cooperate closely with UNMOT and ensure the security of its personnel so that it can carry out its tasks undisturbed.

In his report to the Security Council, the Secretary-General recommends that in the present circumstances UNMOT should be maintained. We endorse that recommendation and will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

It is human nature to enjoy listening to pleasant words, and Ambassador Qin Huasun is no exception to this. Hence, I shall certainly convey to Ambassador Qin all the kind and pleasant words addressed to him today.

**Mr. Larraín** (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I wish at the outset to welcome the representative of Tajikistan to the Security Council Chamber.

Six months ago, by resolution 1030 (1995), the Security Council agreed to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and requested the Secretary-General to report to it every three months on the progress towards a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his three-monthly reports pursuant to that resolution, the latest of which (S/1996/412) has been carefully considered by the Security Council, and has formed the basis of the draft resolution before us today.

My delegation cannot conceal its frustration at the information not merely that there has been no progress during this period but that the situation in Tajikistan continues to be very tense and has actually deteriorated seriously in some regions. Moreover, hostile acts have impeded the pursuit of political negotiations and have led to the virtual stagnation of the peace process.

We wish also to state our special concern at and firm rejection of the continued violation of the 1994 cease-fire agreement and the failure to put in place the conditions necessary to sustain the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan, such as progress in the process of national reconciliation and the promotion of democracy, as the Security Council has repeatedly requested.

My delegation has often stated its firm condemnation of harassment and restrictions on the freedom of movement of United Nations peace missions. We wish therefore to indicate our particular concern at the facts in this case and to remind the parties that the security of the civilian and military personnel of the Mission in Tajikistan must be rigorously guaranteed.

My delegation is also concerned at the critical humanitarian situation resulting from the conflict; we therefore support and express our special gratitude for the economic and social activities carried out by the United Nations in the field, which are directly helping those most harshly affected. Hence, we affirm that the international community must continue to devote its attention to the continuing emergency situation, which is accompanied by massive unemployment, poverty and starvation, as indicated by the Secretary-General in his most recent report.

Furthermore, in the context of our concern for the humanitarian situation, my delegation emphasizes the importance it attaches to the appeal made in the draft

resolution to the Tajik parties to cooperate fully with the International Committee of the Red Cross in order to facilitate the exchange of prisoners and detainees between the opposition and the Government.

Despite the sombre picture in Tajikistan, we see as a positive sign the conviction expressed by the parties that the only way to resolve the Tajik conflict is through political dialogue. We therefore firmly appeal to the authorities of the Government and of the opposition to translate their constructive position into deeds, and we therefore urge them both to resume political negotiations without delay, to undertake to implement the cease-fire agreement and to renew it indefinitely.

We believe that the Council should receive without further delay tangible signals from the parties of their intention to move forward in the peace process. Such an attitude would be consistent with the desire that has often been expressed, and is now being ratified, by the Security Council, to continue to lend its cooperation and support in order to resolve this conflict.

Accordingly, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution, which extends for a new period of six months the Mission in Tajikistan.

In conclusion, we wish to express our firm support and appreciation to the Special Representative, Mr. Gerd Merrem, as well as to all the military and civilian personnel of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan, who are carrying out their tasks in such difficult circumstances.

**Mr. Wisnumurti** (Indonesia): Allow me to begin by extending my delegation's congratulations to you, Sir, upon your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of June. We are convinced that with your diplomatic skill and vast experience you will guide the Council effectively. My delegation pledges its full cooperation to you and to your delegation.

We would also like to express our appreciation to Ambassador Qin Huasun of China for his excellent leadership in presiding over the work of the Council last month.

My delegation would like to extend its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his insightful report on the situation in Tajikistan, as contained in document S/1996/412. The continued fighting, the degradation of the humanitarian condition of the civilian population and the breakdown of the Ashgabat talks, as reported by the Secretary-General, are indeed alarming. We call upon all parties to halt the fighting immediately, in particular in Tavildara, and to permit the civilian population to return in peace and safety to their homes. We therefore welcome the statements by President Rakhmonov and Mr. Nuri accepting an extension of the cease-fire agreement. The news that the parties are in the process of agreeing to resume the inter-Tajik talks early in July is also encouraging. We are pleased to note that the rest of the situation in the country remains generally calm, although we take note of the potentially volatile situation in Leninabad after the occurrence of mass protests and the pursuant government intervention.

We welcome the initiative of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Gerd Merrem, during his recent mission to the region, and we hope that it will soon bear fruit by bringing the parties together at the negotiating table.

In recent declarations, the Tajik Government and the United Tajik Opposition have agreed that only a political resolution to this conflict will bring about lasting peace and stability in Tajikistan. We deeply regret the restrictions on the freedom of movement imposed by the parties on the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT). While we welcome the recent assurances of President Rakhmonov that the restrictions will be lifted, we are concerned that thus far there have been no tangible acts to that effect. We call upon all parties to cooperate with UNMOT.

In the light of the situation prevailing in Tajikistan, it is evident that the role of UNMOT remains important. We take note of the fact that the Government of Tajikistan has stressed the importance of UNMOT's continuing presence in the country. For these reasons, my delegation supports the extension of the mandate of UNMOT for another six months, as proposed by the Secretary-General, and will vote in favour of the draft resolution now before us.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to pay tribute to Mr. Darko Silovic, who is now leaving the post of Head of Mission of UNMOT, for a job well done. We would also like to thank Brigadier-General Hasan Abaza and the personnel of UNMOT for their untiring efforts in dangerous and fairly trying circumstances. Finally, we would like to welcome Mr. Gerd Merrem, in his twin roles as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and as the Head of Mission of UNMOT.

**The President** (*interpretation from Arabic*): I thank the representative of Indonesia for his kind words addressed to me.

I now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1996/430.

*A vote was taken by show of hands.*

*In favour:*

Botswana, Chile, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

**The President** (*interpretation from Arabic*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1061 (1996).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

**Mrs. Albright** (United States of America): The United States welcomes the candid and detailed report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Tajikistan and supports the Secretary-General's recommendation that the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) be extended for another six months. In doing so, though, we would like to underline our serious concern about the deterioration of the military situation in Tajikistan and the continued lack of progress in the United Nations-mediated inter-Tajik talks.

As the Secretary-General notes in his report, Tajik Government and opposition forces are now engaged in some of the most serious fighting in the country since the end of the civil war in 1992. The two sides continue to profess their commitment to the standing cease-fire but, in practice, have reinforced their troops, conducted offensives and counter-offensives and shown little inclination to end this dangerous spiral. There have also been reports that areas of northern Afghanistan have been bombed or shelled in recent months, apparently in connection with the Tajik conflict. We urge, in the strongest terms, both sides to end the fighting now and abide strictly by the terms of the cease-fire.

The lack of progress in the peace talks is also a serious problem. The last two sessions of the talks appear to have made little headway towards a resolution of the conflict, despite the best efforts of the United Nations Special Envoy, Mr. Píriz-Ballón. We are dismayed by the seeming inability of the two sides thus far to agree even on confidence-building measures, such as prisoner exchanges.

One key element towards national reconciliation would be resumption of the operations of the Joint Commission for monitoring the cease-fire accord. We support the resolution's call on the United Tajik Opposition to accept the written security guarantees recently put forward by the Government. At the same time, we urge the Government to intensify its investigation into the 24 February kidnapping of the opposition Co-Chairman of the Joint Commission, who is still missing.

The two sides must also abide by their commitment to allow UNMOT observers freedom of movement and unfettered access to areas where cease-fire violations may have occurred. The Secretary-General reports that UNMOT's activities have been severely impeded by both sides. This would appear to call into question the parties' commitment to UNMOT's mission.

We welcome the new Special Representative, Mr. Merrem, and commend his active efforts to get the next round of talks under way as soon as possible. We regret that the Government was unable to accept Mr. Merrem's invitation to begin the talks on 17 June. We understand that the talks could occur in the first part of July, and urge the Tajik parties not to let this date slip any further.

Finally, I want to underline my Government's strong endorsement of the passage in this resolution calling for a review of UNMOT's future in Tajikistan should prospects for the peace process not improve during the mandate period. UNMOT's presence in Tajikistan is a concrete demonstration of the international community's commitment to helping the Tajik parties achieve peace and national reconciliation. However, UNMOT can be truly effective only if the parties themselves recommit themselves to these objectives.

**Mr. Matuszewski** (Poland): May I begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of June. Let me assure you of the full cooperation and support of the Polish delegation. I should also like to pay tribute to Ambassador Qin of China for the excellent manner in

which he presided over the Council in the month of May. Our thanks also go to all members of his delegation.

The Polish delegation voted in favour of the resolution that the Security Council has just adopted. We are convinced that the continuing presence of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) in Tajikistan will contribute to the stabilization of that country and assist the parties in their attempts peacefully to resolve the conflict.

Our approach to the extension of the mandate of UNMOT is also based on some encouraging, although still weak and inconsistent, signals coming from Tajikistan. I refer to the renewed commitment of the leaders of both parties to a political settlement of the conflict. In this context, we welcome the apparent readiness of the Government and the opposition to resume the inter-Tajik talks. The decision of the Government and the opposition to extend the cease-fire also influenced our position on the resolution, although the parties have yet to prove their sincerity in this respect.

This prompts me to make a couple of other remarks. While discussing the proposal of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of UNMOT, the members of the Security Council made a number of grim observations concerning current developments in Tajikistan. Some of these developments are particularly disturbing. Large-scale ongoing fighting has been causing enormous human suffering, loss of life and destruction. According to the Secretary-General, the present situation in Tajikistan is at its worst since the end of the civil war of 1992.

The parties to the conflict seem to be untouched by the appeals and requests of the Security Council contained in the two presidential statements on Tajikistan, issued respectively in March and May this year. This is true, for instance, of the parties' dealing with UNMOT, resulting in the restriction of movement of the Mission's personnel and in the lack of adequate security and safety conditions. We expect this situation to improve immediately.

In conclusion, let me pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his efforts in assisting the parties on their difficult way towards peace and reconciliation. May I also thank the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Gerd Merrem, for what he has achieved since his recent appointment and assure him of our support in his further endeavours. Last, but not least, I would like to express our gratitude to UNMOT personnel and their partners from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Collective Peace-keeping Forces.

These are the comments which the Polish delegation had to make in addition to the statement delivered by the delegation of Italy on behalf of the Presidency of the European Union, with which my delegation associated itself.

**The President** (*interpretation from Arabic*): I thank the representative of Poland for his kind words addressed to me.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Egypt.

At the outset, the delegation of Egypt wishes to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report of 7 June. Our gratitude also goes to the former Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, who carried out his tasks in an excellent manner.

My delegation supported the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), for the following reasons.

First, the Egyptian Government is concerned over the great deterioration of the situation in Tajikistan. My Government is convinced of the urgent need for the parties to abide sincerely and in good faith by the commitments they have undertaken, and in particular of the need for the prompt resumption, without any further delay, of the inter-Tajik talks in order to reach a peaceful settlement as soon as possible.

Secondly, all hostilities must cease immediately and all parties must fully comply with the Tehran Agreement on a Temporary Cease-fire and all other commitments they have undertaken, in particular the extension of the cease-fire throughout the inter-Tajik talks. These actions will facilitate the achievement of a peaceful settlement and the establishment of a climate of mutual trust between the parties.

Thirdly, despite the restrictions imposed on the freedom of movement of UNMOT personnel and the threats to their safety, the Mission's ongoing implementation of its tasks is essential to creating an atmosphere conducive to the resumption of the talks and the efforts to find a peaceful settlement. In this regard, we reaffirm the need for both parties to ensure the

freedom of movement of and the highest degree of security for the Mission's personnel.

Having supported the resolution on the extension of UNMOT's mandate, my delegation wishes to reiterate the importance of a thorough and comprehensive review of the situation when the Mission's new mandate expires, and in particular of an appraisal of the parties' serious commitment to achieving a peaceful settlement.

In conclusion, the delegation of Egypt wishes to thank Mr. Darko Silovic, former Head of Mission of UNMOT, for his remarkable efforts. We also welcome Mr. Gerd Merrem, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and wish him every success in his tasks.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no further speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

*The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.*